

(c) whether the Ministry has decided to change the tariff of import duty recently and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN) : (a) The details of natural rubber(NR) imported the last three years and the current years are as under:-

Import of natural rubber

Year	Import (Tonne)
2010-11	190,692
2011-12	214,433
2012-13	217,364
2013-14 (p) (April-January)	279,627

(b) and (c) The applied rate of basic customs duty effective from 9 January 2004 was 20% for dry forms of NR and 70% for latex. In December 2010, import duty on dry forms of NR was revised as 20% or Rs. 20 per kg whichever is lower. In January 2012, import duty on latex was revised as Rs. 49 per kg if the duty amount per kg calculated at the rate of 70% advalorem is more than Rs. 49 per kg. The Government has revised the import duty on dry forms of NR from “20% or Rs. 20.00 per kg whichever is lower” to 20% or Rs. 30.00 per kg whichever is lower” with effect from 20 December 2013.

India EFTA Trade Pact

2643. SHRIMATI T. RATNABAI:

SHRIMOHD. ALIKHAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India-European Free Trade Association trade pact has been worked out; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN) : (a) and (b) The India- European Free Trade Association (EFTA) trade pact has not yet been worked out.

Aid to Bell-metal industry

2644. SHRI AVINASH PANDE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state: (a) whether the Ministry is aware that the artisans engaged in the traditional Bell metal industry have been facing acute hardships due to rising cost of the raw material which is generally imported from Pakistan at very high cost and cut-throat competition of artificial products pouring from outside the State;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to formulate special comprehensive package, providing aid and subsidies for the revival and modernization of the Bell metal industry; and

(c) if so, whether Government is planning to provide any special aid and subsidies for the revival of Brass-work industry in Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN) : (a) No such instance has been reported.

(b) and (c) The Ministry of Micro Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) is implementing the National Manufacturing Competitiveness Programme, MSE-Cluster Development Programme and Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme for providing assistance towards modernization in the country. The benefits are also provided under NEIIP (North East Industrial Investment Promotion Policy) and under state industrial policy to Bell metal industry in Assam. Further, under MSE-Cluster Development Programme of Ministry of MSME, a proposal for setting up a Model Common Facility centre at Bell Metal Cluster at Hajo Kamrup of Assam was approved by Ministry with a financial involvement of Rs. 160.61 lakhs and Rs. 81.66 lakhs have been released as 1st installment.

Secondly, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles is implementing seven generic schemes for promotion & development of handicrafts (including bell-metal craft), namely; Baba Sahib Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana, Design & Technology Upgradation Scheme, Marketing Support Service Scheme, Research & Development Scheme, Handicraft Artisans Comprehensive Welfare Scheme and Infrastructure & Technology Development Scheme.

Thirdly, MSME has been informed by the DC (Handicrafts) and Govt. of Assam that (i) The DC (Handicrafts), has sanctioned Rs. 49.15 lakhs for 15 SHG (315 artisans) at Sarthebari at Barpeta District of Assam under Baba Sabeah Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana (AHVY). The DC (Handicrafts) has also sanctioned one Common Facility Centre involving an amount of Rs. 49.76 lakhs and one raw material bank amounting to Rs. 100 lakhs for the cluster, (ii) An amount of Rs. 157.34 lakhs was released under the State Priority Scheme for Well Metal Industries, Sarthebari by Govt. of Assam and (iii) From the funds for raw material assistance, Rs. 50 lakhs was provided to 280 nos of Bell Metal artisans, and Rs. 25 lakhs to 200 nos brass metal artisans.